

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-21 are pending in this case. Claims 1, 12, and 15 are amended by the present amendment. Amended Claims 1, 12, and 15 are supported by, for example, the specification at page 6, line 10, page 8, line 9, and page 13, line 18. Thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-18, 10, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Vaudreuil (U.S. Patent No. 5,740,230) in view of Thorne et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,958,005, hereinafter "Thorne"). Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Vaudreuil in view of Thorne and further in view of Yokomizo (U.S. Patent No. 6,163,796).

With regard to the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Vaudreuil in view of Thorne, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended independent Claim 1 recites in part:

a first message gateway receives a message in a first format from a sending client over a first transfer medium and transmits the message and/or an information extracted thereof to the message broker, the message broker automatically selects an appropriate second transfer medium depending on the content of the client database and supplied message and/or information extracted thereof, and the message is sent in a second format to the target client by means of a second message gateway configured for a transmission over the second transfer medium selected by the message broker,

wherein messages include meta information containing a plurality of different fields, one of the fields being a secure read count and a maximum read count value limiting the maximum reads of the message,

wherein the message broker controls the message flow by inspecting the meta information of the messages.

However, Thorne describes security for messages in a *single format only*, electronic mail.¹ Accordingly, the proposed combination would only include security features for messages in an electronic mail format. Thus, even if the proposed combination of Vaudreuil and Thorne were proper, the proposed combination does not include the feature that a first message gateway receives a message in a *first* format, the message is sent in a *second* format, and the messages include meta information containing a plurality of different fields, one of the fields being a secure read count and a maximum read count value limiting the maximum reads of the message, as recited in Claim 1. Consequently, even viewing the cited references together, each and every element of Claim 1 is not taught or suggested by Vaudreuil and Thorne.

Further, Thorne describes that a *terminal receiving an email*, not a message broker, determines whether or not the message has been read more than the maximum number of allowed reads.² Thus, Thorne does not teach or suggest “the *message broker* controls the message flow by inspecting the meta information of the messages” as recited in Claim 1.

Since Vaudreuil and Thorne do not teach each and every element of amended Claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1 (and Claims 2-11 dependent therefrom) is patentable over Vaudreuil and Thorne.

Independent Claims 12 and 15 recite similar elements to Claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 12 and 15 (and Claims 13, 14, and 16-21 dependent therefrom) are patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 19 as unpatentable over Vaudreuil and Thorne in view of Yokomizo, it is noted that Claim 19 is dependent from Claim 15, and thus is believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Yokomizo does not cure any of the above-noted deficiencies of Vaudreuil and

¹See, e.g., Thorne, column 1, lines 6-8.

²See, e.g., Thorne at column 9, lines 44-53 and column 11, lines 5-12.

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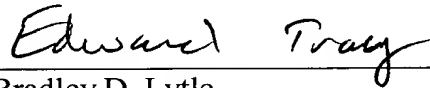
Thorne. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 19 is patentable over Vaudreuil and Thorne in view of Yokomizo.

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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